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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to review the programs provided for gifted children by the North York, Ontario, Board of Education. The current report is an interim progress report encompassing the first phase of the study. Data collection for this phase focused on parent and teacher perceptions, and student self concepts. A questionnaire was used to study parent perceptions. Teachers had the option of a questionnaire or an interview, and students completed the appropriate level of the North York Self Concept Inventory. Results showed that the programs for the gifted had been well received by the staff and the parents of the students. The programs met the needs of the gifted children. The comments about the program referring to the elementary program were most positive. In higher grades some teachers experienced difficulty meeting individual needs through program modification. Suggestions for changes to the programs were offered. The parent and teacher survey questionnaires are appended. (JAZ)

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NORTH YORK BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH REPORT

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

Phase I: Interim Progress Report

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Sally Erling

February, 1985

TM 860602

Preface

This study was carried out under the direction of an ad hoc committee which first began meeting during the 1983-84 school year to discuss strategies for reviewing the progress of North York's programs for the gifted. Subsequently, this committee has overseen and contributed to all phases of the present study from the proposal stage to this report.

The committee members were:

Chief Consultant, Gifted (Chairperson)	Barry Wilde (1983-84) Beverley Muir (1984-85)
Program Leaders, Gifted - East	Helen Gilks
- West	Beverley Muir (1983-84) Johanne Messner (1984-85)
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INTRODUCTION

Background

The Ministry of Education defines gifted children as "those who have an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability such that differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program are required". Consequently, under Bill 82 governing Special Education, intellectually gifted children are to be considered as exceptional students and are to be provided with a program which meets their particular needs.

In North York, the Board of Education implemented a system-wide screening procedure during the 1980-81 school year to identify intellectually gifted students and established its first official programs for the gifted in September 1981 at the grades 3 and 4 levels. Since that time the program has been extended through the grades, up to and including grade 10 as of September 1984. Due to the small proportion of gifted students (approximately 5% of the school population), these programs are located in about 18 centres throughout the city rather than in each local school.

The Program

The program provided for the gifted in North York is essentially a standard curriculum based on approved Board and Ministry documents, which is modified to address the unique needs of gifted students. The most effective program will offer some differentiation in the areas of **Content, Teaching Strategies** and **Learning Environments,** in order to provide an appropriate scope of study.

The mechanism for providing gifted education varies depending on the grade level. In the **early primary grades,** prior to formal assessment of intellectual ability, children who are believed to be gifted are provided with program modification in the regular classroom.

Formal screening and admissions procedures first occur during the grade 2 year on a system-wide basis. Pupils participate in an extensive process involving parent and teacher observations, group tests of mental ability and achievement, as well as individual assessments of intellectual ability. Regional I.P.R.C. meetings are convened to discuss pupils deemed to be likely candidates for the program. Roughly 130 to 150 pupils are recommended each year for placement in a gifted program commencing in grade 3.

Gifted students in **Grades 3 to 6** are placed in full time, self-contained classes for the gifted and are taught by Special Education teachers of the gifted. Students participate in all aspects of the school's curriculum, while receiving a classroom program that is differentiated to meet their particular needs.

Gifted students in **Grades 7 to 9** are placed in self-contained classes for the gifted for most of the academic subject areas. While taught as a group for approximately 50% of the time, they are integrated with other students for the remaining subjects. Gifted students are taught by Special Education teachers of the gifted and by teachers of subject specialties.

At the **secondary school level**, advanced level credits, differentiated to meet the needs of gifted students are currently offered in a number of academic subject areas.

The Study

During the 1983-84 school year, a small ad hoc committee comprised of the Consultant, Gifted Programs (Chairperson), the Program Leaders, Gifted, representatives from Educational Research and Evaluation Services, and Psychological and Assessment Services met regularly to consider methods of reviewing the progress of the programs for the gifted. The resulting proposal outlined a study which would be conducted in two parts.

The current report is an interim progress report encompassing the first phase of the study. Specifically, the objectives for Phase I were:

- to determine the perceptions of both parents and teachers of gifted students regarding the success of North York's programs for the gifted to date.
- to compare the results for gifted students on the North York Self Concept Inventory with North York norms at each grade level.

Phase II is the initiation of a longitudinal study of student progress in the gifted programs and will include the compilation of data from a variety of measures on a regular basis beginning with the incoming grade 3's in 1984-85. The details of this phase will be incorporated in a future report.

Methods and Procedures

Data collection for this interim report occurred in the Fall of 1984 and focussed on parent perceptions, teacher perceptions and students' self concept. The procedures for gathering this information are detailed below.

All parents of gifted students in grades 4 to 10 were sent a questionnaire via mail and invited to share their perceptions of their child's program. Questions related to their awareness and understanding of the program, the degree to which the program meets its stated objectives and the particular needs of their child, effects on the child and suggestions for change.

Postage-paid return envelopes were enclosed with the questionnaire to encourage the return of completed surveys. Two weeks later, reminder letters were distributed for student delivery in an effort to further improve the rate of response. It was acknowledged in the covering letter that parents with a child in the program for the gifted for less than one year may not wish to comment, this being also the rationale for the exclusion of parents of gifted students who had just entered grade 3.

All teachers of the gifted were given the opportunity to share their perceptions of the program's success in one of two ways - a questionnaire or an interview. The majority of teachers received a written survey through the courier, while the remaining teachers, randomly selected, were asked to participate in a personal interview conducted by a member of the Research staff. The content of the survey and the interview schedule was basically the same. Teachers were asked about such things as their ability to implement a differentiated program and meet the needs and expectations of students/parents, the organizational model, the program's strengths and weaknesses, and recommended changes.

Finally, all students enrolled in programs for the gifted from grades 3 - 10 completed the appropriate level of the North York Self Concept Inventory, administered by their homeroom or core teacher.

Copies of both the parent survey and the teacher survey have been included as Appendices A and B, respectively.

The Results

The sections to follow summarize the results of the instruments described above. These findings are presented in three parts:

- The Parents' Perspective
- The Teachers' Perspective
- The Self Concept of Gifted Students

Within each of these sections, the results are reported separately for each panel in an attempt to respond to the variations in program organization. Differences and/or similarities between panels are noted where significant.

THE PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE

Almost 1,000 surveys were mailed to parents of children in programs for the gifted from grades 4 to 10. Completed surveys were returned by approximately 60% of them, representing a very favourable response rate. More specifically, the percentage of parents from each panel who responded was as follows:

- Elementary 61%
- Junior High 59%
- Secondary 51%

Parent responses to the questionnaire in Appendix A are outlined in the following sections which (i) describe the respondents (ii) tabulate the closed end items and (iii) summarize their anecdotal comments.

TABLE 1a

Description of Respondents

Of the 569 parents who responded, only 6% of them had children in the grade 10 secondary level program. The remaining respondents were almost equally divided between the elementary and junior high panels (49% and 46%, respectively).

1. Within each panel, the distribution of respondents according to the grade placement of their child was as follows:

Elementary (N = 278)	grade 4	- 37%
	grade 5	- 31%
	grade 6	- 32%
Junior High (N = 355)	grade 7	- 39%
	grade 8	- 33%
	grade 9	- 28%
Secondary (N = 36)	grade 10	- all

2. The figures below were calculated to reflect an **average** number of years that children in each panel have been enrolled in North York's gifted programs:

Elementary	2.4 years
Junior High	2.8 years
Secondary	2.3 years

TABLE 1b

Parent Perceptions

	Elementary N = 278 %	Junior High N = 255 %	Secondary N = 36 %
3. Child's attitude about being in a gifted class is:			
. very enthusiastic	58	39	22
. positive	40	52	64
. indifferent	3	6	14
. negative	1	1	-
Parents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements:	% AGREEMENT *		
4. I have an adequate understanding of the gifted program.	93	84	89
5. I am aware of the activities and experiences that my child pursues in the gifted class.	94	85	86
6. The gifted program offers a greater variety of experiences than the regular program in terms of:			
i) program content	89	84	75
ii) teaching strategies	83	72	75
iii) learning environments	84	82	81
7. Generally, the gifted program seems to be meeting the individual needs of my child.	87	77	81

* AGREEMENT is equivalent to the sum of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree"

STATEMENTS	% AGREEMENT		
	Elementary N = 278 %	Junior High N = 255 %	Secondary N = 36 %
8. The program provides my child with interesting, challenging learning experiences.	95	84	89
9. My child is receiving satisfactory instruction in the basic academic skills.	84	85	89
10. A wide variety of materials and human resources are made available to gifted students.	80	68	75
11. The gifted program encourages my child to pursue individual interests and talents.	74	58	61
12. The gifted program encourages my child to develop good work habits in terms of:			
i) task commitment	88	76	75
ii) organizational ability	85	73	69
13. The gifted program encourages my child to pursue investigations to a greater depth and breadth.	91	77	69
14. The gifted program encourages my child to think in new and different ways.	83	74	75
15. The gifted program addresses my child's physical, social and emotional needs.	74	56	53
16. The gifted program stimulates creativity in my child.	84	77	64
17. I am kept well informed of the program and my child's progress.	73	62	72

Generally the figures outlined in Table 1 reveal that the parents of gifted children in all three panels are very positive about gifted education in North York in terms of their understanding and awareness of the program and what it offers their child in the way of experiences, challenges, resources and individual needs.

In almost all respects the parents of gifted pupils at the elementary level are the most satisfied with the program and their children have, by far, the most enthusiastic attitude about being in a class for the gifted. Three-quarters or more of the elementary parents were in agreement with all the statements about program. In all but one case, these figures were higher (often by 10 percentage points or more) than those recorded by the parents of junior high and secondary students. The proportion of parents who **strongly** agreed with the statements was highest in the elementary panel as well.

The response patterns of parents from the junior high and secondary levels tended to be more closely comparable. Their responses, although favourable, were somewhat less positive than those of elementary parents. It could be speculated that because junior high and secondary gifted students actually participate in a specialized program for only 50% of the day (as opposed to a full day, self-contained program), their parents may be less aware of and/or less involved in the program.

About one-quarter of the junior high parents and one-fifth of the secondary parents did not think that they were kept well informed about the program and their child's progress or that their child was encouraged to pursue individual interests and talents. In addition many parents were unsure whether the program addressed their child's physical, social and emotional needs.

Further clarification and elaboration of some of these views are provided in the parents' written responses to open-end questions about:

- the needs of their child
- changes in their child
- effective aspects of the program
- suggested changes to the program

In fact, most parents took the opportunity to comment on at least some of the open-ended questions on the survey. Due to the large numbers of returns, vast amounts of anecdotal type information was generated in this regard. In the interests of space, the following section condenses the results by reporting only the highlights. Considerably more detail is offered in Appendix C. Please refer to it for a breakdown of responses by panel.

Meeting Child's Individual Needs

As indicated in Table 1 approximately 80% of parents agree that the program for the gifted seems to be meeting the individual needs of their child. According to their comments, the challenge of the program is the most crucial factor in addressing these needs. Parents remarked that their children are now stimulated and interested in school and that the challenge of a more competitive environment has enhanced their desire to learn and their motivation. Similarly, many parents noted a more positive, enthusiastic attitude toward school and learning,

whereas before some of these children were bored, unhappy, even behaviour problems.

Specific program features considered significant by some parents included individualization according to abilities and interests; freedom and flexibility; and interaction with "peers". Success, however, is often dependent on the teacher - who could range from "outstanding" to, less often, "disappointing".

Negative comments about the program were significantly fewer in number and ranged from "expectations too low" to "too much pressure" or from "not enough emphasis on the basics" to "lack of individualization". Reports of student apathy and disappointment with or uncertainty about the program in general were most likely to be made by parents of junior high students.

Physical, Social and Emotional Needs

In spite of some disadvantages such as lack of interaction with regular students, limited "social" groups in split grades and/or loss of neighbourhood friends, positive aspects of socialization and emotional well-being were more frequently cited as being by-products of the program. For example, parents of elementary and junior high students indicated that their children now relate better to and are more comfortable with their "peer" groups, are more socially aware and generally are happier, more relaxed and better behaved.

On the other hand, some parents in all three panels felt that the physical needs of gifted students are given a low priority and suggested that physical development be encouraged, perhaps by way of more organized sports.

Another group of parents noted that the program for the gifted did not address the physical, social and emotional needs of students any differently or any more so than in the regular program - with the implication by some that they did not expect it to. There does appear, however, to be a high degree of uncertainty about this whole issue and this is reflected in the large number of parents who did not elaborate on this question.

Effect on Feelings About Self

Almost 200 parents reported an increase in their child's self-confidence or an improved self-image as a result of their participation in the gifted program. Others felt that the program had helped to maintain, enhance or reinforce an already positive self concept. This confidence in themselves extended also to an increased confidence in their ideas and abilities and a willingness to take risks/make decisions.

Many students felt more positively about themselves both socially and intellectually. Socially, they experienced a greater sense of belonging and no longer felt they were the "odd man out". Intellectually, they were stimulated and tended to be more ambitious, productive and motivated. In some cases, students developed a more realistic awareness of their potential in terms of capabilities as well as weaknesses. Positive feelings, overall, are reflected by those parents who said their children feel "special", "proud", "privileged" or "important" because they are in a class for the gifted.

In a few instances, however, parents indicated that the pressure and competition occasionally created feelings of inadequacy and anxiety. At the opposite extreme are those children who develop feelings of superiority or over-confidence due to their labelling as "gifted".

Other Significant Changes in Child

A more positive attitude to school was most frequently mentioned as a significant change in a child resulting from being in a gifted program. Many parents found their children to be happier, less bored, enjoying school more and eager to attend.

In terms of other changes there was considerable overlap with the responses from the previous question. A partial list of some of these observed changes (or enhanced characteristics) is provided below:

- more sociable - open, outgoing, willing to participate
- more competitive - strives harder, increased desire to do well
- more comfortable/compatible with "peer" group
- more informed, aware, alert, knowledgeable
- improved work habits - including organizational ability and task completion
- more mature
- more confident
- more independent

On the negative side, a few parents cited isolation from neighbourhood friends; pressure and frustration at no longer being "the best in the class": and an "elitist" mentality.

Finally, some parents expressed difficulty in making such comparisons or judgement statements. They noted that some changes may have occurred in the regular program anyway or that they may be due to the natural process of maturation.

Effective Aspects of the Gifted Program

The challenge and stimulation of the gifted program has been a recurring theme in parent perceptions so far and once again it heads the list as one of the most effective aspects of this program. Ninety parents extolled the virtues of the challenge, indepth study, fast pace and unlimited scope of the gifted program. An equal number of parents specified a particular subject or subjects which they regarded as being especially effective (including Math, English/Language Arts, Computers, Arts, Science).

The "people" aspects of the program were also considered key factors in its success. These included both the children's association with a more homogeneous and appropriate group of gifted peers (82 responses) as well as their exposure to teachers who are described as being - skilled, dedicated, sensitive, accessible. (69 responses)

Many parents felt their children were benefitting from a smaller class size. The implied advantage of this is the opportunity for more individual attention. It is not surprising then that "focus on the individual" is also on the list of effective aspects; most notably at the elementary school level. This individualization entails the flexibility to work at a level and pace appropriate to each child's own interests, needs and abilities.

A number of parents commented generally on the "variety" available in the gifted program; be it in terms of experiences, resources, teaching strategies, learning environments or topics. Other parents cited specific activities which they had found to be effective for their child. Some of these included:

- Field trips or out-of-class activities
- Researching skills and techniques
- Higher level thinking skills, brainstorming, problem solving
- Projects, assignments

Suggested Changes to the Current Program

By far the greatest number of suggestions for change related to a specific subject area or topic. Although the details are too extensive to report in full, generally these were areas which parents felt required improvement or an increase in emphasis. Some of the subjects mentioned are listed below in descending order of frequency, and following each of these are a few examples of "typical" comments made by parents.

- the "Basics"
  - more emphasis on the basic skills and the 3 R's
  - don't assume that pupils already have these skills
  - want some evidence that these are being learned

- French
  - should be an enriched or gifted class for French
  - more intensive French instruction, particularly for those who came from French Immersion

- Arts
  - what happened to music?
  - more visual arts, drama, etc.
  - perhaps hire itinerant specialists

- Mathematics
  - not enough challenge/too slow
  - more grouping according to ability; allow students to progress at their own pace

- Computers
  - more exposure to and time on computers
  - more and better computer instruction and programming

- English/Language Arts
  - more emphasis on proper usage, grammar, writing skills

- Science
  - more indepth study

- Physical Education
  - more opportunities for sports activities
  - stress physical fitness

The remaining comments were unrelated to any specific subject but pertained to the program in general. Most common was a request for further individualization of program, involving more recognition and support of each child's special interests and abilities, as well as their deficiencies.

Parents also suggested improved parent/teacher contact and communication or school feedback. Related to this were requests for more information about the program itself, such as curriculum and course outlines, objectives and activities, and expectations.

Other recommendations included:

- more variety and innovation
- create some standardization, e.g. more continuity and consistency between teachers, grades and/or panels
- more field trips
- more homework and assignments
- less homework/reduced workload

Finally, a few suggestions were specific to the concerns of one panel only. Parents of elementary school pupils, for example, emphasized the elimination of split-grade classes, whereas some junior high parents expressed disappointment with their program. This latter group requested such things as:

- more qualified, carefully screened teachers;
- more challenge - in terms of more indepth study, divergent approaches, higher standards;
- increased emphasis on organizational skills and study habits such as task completion and time management.

THE TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE

Of the 89 teachers in programs for the gifted from grade 3 to grade 10, fifteen were asked to participate in personal interviews while the remainder received written surveys through the courier.

The response patterns of teachers, by panel, are outlined below:

	Surveys returned	+	Interviews completed	=	Total response	(Response rate)
Elementary teachers	14	+	8	=	22	(73%)
Junior High teachers	14	+	4	=	18	(72%)
Secondary teachers	10	+	2	=	12	(43%)

The results from the surveys and the interviews are reported separately below.

(a) Surveys

The following tables describe the respondents and summarize the teachers' responses to the closed-end questions on the written questionnaire.

TABLE 2a

Description of Survey Respondents

			#
1. Grades taught	Elementary: (N = 14)	grade 3 -	4
		grade 4 -	3
		grade 5 -	3
		grade 6 -	4
	Junior High (N = 14)	grade 7 -	8
		8 -	2
		9 -	4
	Secondary (N = 10)	grade 10 -	10

2. Number of Years Teaching a Gifted Class (#):

	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	(Average)
Elementary teachers	1	3	3	3	4	(3.4 years)
Junior High teachers	6	5	3	-	-	(1.8 years)
Secondary teachers	5	1	2	1	-	(1.9 years)

TABLE 2b

Teacher Perceptions

Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:	AGREEMENT *		
	Elementary N=14 #	Junior High N=14 #	Secondary N=10 #
3. A differentiated program, based on modifications of the regular school program is an effective way of meeting the needs of gifted children.	13	10	9
4. I feel comfortable implementing a differentiated program for my students.	14	12	9
5. I enjoy teaching gifted children.	14	14	9
6. For the most part, student placements in the gifted program have been appropriate.	14	14	7
7. The gifted students display a positive attitude towards school and learning.	13	14	8
8. There are adequate resources, materials and facilities available to provide an effective gifted program.	5	9	2
9. I am able to meet individual needs and interests by varying the degree of program modification for each child.	11	7	3
10. I feel that the gifted program is meeting the expectations of:			
i) the students	12	11	6
ii) their parents	11	10	6

* AGREEMENT is equivalent to the sum of "Strongly agree" and "Agree".

As indicated above, elementary teachers have had the most years of experience teaching gifted students and were generally the most positive respondents. Teachers from all panels unanimously agreed that they enjoyed teaching gifted children, with most of them strongly agreeing with the statement. Almost all teachers agreed that a differentiated program is an effective method of providing gifted education and felt comfortable implementing such a program. Those who did not agree were either unsure or did not respond.

The results also indicate positive student attitudes, appropriate program placements and success, generally, in meeting the expectations of both the students and their parents. Some teachers, particularly at the secondary level, were unsure about the latter.

On a less positive note, teachers in the upper grades seemed to have more difficulty meeting individual needs through program modification. One-fifth of the junior high teachers and one-half of the secondary teachers did not feel they were able to do this. The availability of resources, materials and/or facilities was also a concern for at least half of the elementary teachers and almost two-thirds of the secondary teachers. This group did not feel these conditions were adequate to provide an effective program for the gifted.

The remainder of the questionnaire consisted of open-ended items. Some highlights are reported below for each question, with additional detail, by panel, provided in Appendix D.

Perceptions of the Existing Organizational Model

According to teachers at all grade levels, the greatest advantage to the organizational set up of the gifted program is the grouping of students with their gifted peers. Secondly, the program itself is more appropriate in terms of meeting the students' needs and maximizing their potential.

Some teachers at the elementary level, however, still find it difficult to accommodate the wide range of individual differences and exceptionalities, particularly if the classes have split grades or become too large.

Perceptions of Gifted Students

Almost all the teachers indicated that their perception of gifted children had changed since they began teaching them. Teachers now realize that it is harder to make generalizations about gifted students and are more aware of the range of individual differences including weaknesses and other exceptionalities. There was also an awareness of some unexpected traits such as high energy, "humbleness", strong language and a lack of self discipline or good work habits.

Generally there was little evidence of overt conflict between gifted students and regular students. Such incidents were few and usually limited to resentment or name calling.

Strengths of the Program

- peer association
- enthusiasm, support and commitment to the program
- quality of teachers
- smaller classes/opportunity for individual attention
- homogeneous, segregated classes (elementary)
- support services
- the curriculum

Weaknesses of the Program

- inadequate coordination, consistency, continuity
- shortage of materials, funds, resources, and/or P.D.
- exceeding maximum class size
- identification process has some limitations
- lack of clearly defined expectations and objectives

Recommended Changes

Teachers' suggested changes to the current gifted program generally reflected concerns identified above. Recommendations included:

- a central school
- smaller class size, not to exceed the maximum
- more time for planning, development, idea-sharing
- revisions to identification process, e.g. more girls; other criteria, such as task commitment, attitudes
- more professional development
- more consistency
- more support, e.g. resources, assistance
- program should deal with other exceptionalities as well, e.g. L.D., behavioural
- eliminate split-grades

(b) Teacher Interviews

Fifteen teachers were selected to participate in a personal interview rather than complete a written questionnaire. One teacher declined. Of the remainder, eight taught in the elementary panel, four in junior high and two in secondary. As a group, the average years experience teaching the gifted was 2.2 years.

The intent of the interview was to cover the same content as the written survey in a more spontaneous, less rigid format. This provided the respondent with more opportunity to elaborate on her/his opinions and offer anecdotal comments.

At the beginning of the interview, the teachers were asked to briefly describe some of the things they typically do in their gifted class. Four teachers felt that they conduct their class much the same as a regular class in terms of following the same general program and/or teaching philosophy. It was noted,

however, that they have higher expectations for gifted students, will employ different teaching strategies and can cover material faster and in more depth.

In terms of more specific activities, half of the teachers cited interdisciplinary or "theme" study integrating various subjects as a key component of their program. Other features included advanced texts, independent study, individual choice, researching techniques and evaluation for diagnostic programming. Three teachers commented that these students still require some structure in their learning environment. Freedom can then be provided within that framework.

Most teachers expressed extremely positive reactions to either the program itself and/or the gifted students e.g. "I love it", "It's exhilerating - They're unique". Five respondents commented on the added challenge of teaching these students which requires constant energy and a lot more work, although not without its rewards. Sometimes, however, "parents have outrageous expectations" and exert a lot of external pressure.

Generally teachers feel that the programs offered in North York and the way they are set up are effective in meeting the needs of gifted students. Three respondents remarked on the diversity of gifted students with their broad range of interests and abilities and stressed the importance of recognizing these differences. Dealing with all these differences, however, was sometimes difficult. (e.g. underachievers, learning disabilities, behaviour problems). A few teachers speculated that the junior high program will show improvement now that the incoming groups are no longer newcomers to the program, but will have come up through the "gifted" system.

Teachers seem to be fairly comfortable implementing the differentiated program although they may be somewhat inhibited by its relative "newness". Some said they were initially explorative in their approach; experimenting to see what worked, bouncing ideas off others and making adjustments to their teaching style. One of the secondary level teachers, in fact, "felt I was hired to create a program" that could be built on. Consequently, there were suggestions for more curriculum outlines, guidelines and/or structures as well as additional resources and more frequent meetings to talk to others about the program.

In terms of the students themselves, placements in the program for the most part are considered appropriate although some of the "problem spots" included students at the bottom third of the class or those with individual problems e.g. severe behaviour or emotional problems, low fine motor skills, etc. A few teachers suggested that candidates be more closely scrutinized or that other criteria besides I.Q. or academic success be considered. Task-commitment, for instance, was mentioned repeatedly as an important characteristic. The balance of boys/girls and east/west was also questioned.

In describing the attitudes of their gifted students, the teachers employed a host of positive adjectives: more enthusiastic, independent, curious, motivated, attentive, interested, resourceful and capable. In short, "they love learning". A few cited an excellent rate of attendance as evidence of positive attitudes, e.g. "Attendance problems just don't exist", "even at an age when it's "uncool" to like school."

Almost three-quarters of the teachers interviewed acknowledged that their perception of gifted children had changed somewhat since teaching them. In most cases, teachers reported a more realistic view of these children, e.g. they are all individuals; much like other kids; not necessarily the over-achievers and teacher-pleasers; have special needs; require direction, and social/emotional attention. Others discovered characteristics which they didn't necessarily expect, such as a strong sense of humour, fairness and justice; spoiled and self indulgent; caring and sensitive; cultured; creative; less "street-wise".

There did not appear to be much evidence of conflict with the students in the regular programs. Some teachers indicated that they integrate fairly well, mixing in for extra-curricular activities. Others commented that the gifted students tend to "stick-together".

In terms of program itself, the teachers felt that the current program was meeting the needs and expectations of their students. Many of them remarked that the gifted students were happy and considered this a valid indicator of success. Despite these positive reactions, teachers still had concerns or encountered problems in implementing the program. Some of these are discussed below.

Time seemed to be the most crucial concern, with nine respondents making comments relating to the lack of it. They found the gifted program more demanding and had difficulty finding the time for such things as professional development, planning, program modification, getting input from others, marking, and follow-through. In relation to this increased workload there was also some concern about a lack of staff. One teacher indicated, specifically, a need for learning and behaviour specialists.

Generally, other resources and materials seem to be available and satisfactory. Although some teachers complained that they didn't know what funds are specifically available from the school budget for gifted programs, financial support did not seem to be a problem. Two teachers, however, expressed a concern that parents cannot always afford to finance field trips and special events.

Some teachers felt that they had enough information about the gifted, but indicated a desire for more time to read what is available and more opportunity to talk about it and share it with their colleagues. Others did not think that there is enough current information available nor that it is always appropriate. Requests were made for more curriculum guidelines, some broad program objectives and more information about what materials are available. The onus for acquiring information on gifted education often seemed to be placed on the individual teacher, e.g.

- I do "a lot of my own research"
- We are "our own best resources"
- P.D. is done on my own time
- The most valuable information came from a university course, not the Board

Some other concerns included:

- a class size over 20 or 25 impedes the individual attention many of these children need
- still relatively new at it; have not mastered all the practical aspects
- curriculum too open-ended/hit and miss - creates a lot of duplication between classes
- not enough collaboration with colleagues - "would be nice to know what others are doing".

In response to their concerns, teachers were given the opportunity to recommend changes or improvements to the program and/or suggest areas where they require further support/assistance. Those suggestions made more than once are enumerated below:

- more communication, collaboration, brainstorming and/or sharing between teachers (6)
- more workshops, P.D., retraining, sabbaticals (compensated with time or money) (5)
- all gifted in one school, e.g. to centralize resources, increase flexibility (5)
- more in-class assistance, e.g. teacher aides, consultants, psychologists (5)
- provide some curriculum expectations, implementation guidelines (3)
- reinforce/improve basic skills (2)
- smaller class size (2)

THE SELF CONCEPT OF GIFTED STUDENTS

The appropriate level of the North York Self Concept Inventory was administered to all gifted students enrolled in programs from grade 3 through to grade 10. The inventories, which take about 20 minutes to complete, were administered by a classroom or home-room teacher and scored and analyzed by Research staff.

The average scores obtained by grade are reported below in comparison to our North York norms.

TABLE 3

SELF CONCEPT SCORES OF GIFTED STUDENTS

Level	Grade	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd	N.Y. norm
Junior (30 items)	3	151	21	5.7	(19)
	4	159	22	6.2	(20)
	5	140	22	5.9	(20)
	6	163	22	6.1	(21)
Junior High/ Middle School (25 items)	7	150	16	5.2	(17)
	8	119	17	4.7	(17)
	9	120	17	4.8	(17)
Secondary (25 items)	10	64	16	4.8	(16)

The scores obtained on the self concept inventory by students in gifted programs did not differ significantly from the North York norms. On average, gifted students scored slightly higher than or the same as the North York mean at all grade levels except grade 7 where their scores were slightly lower. The drop in self concept at this grade level may be due to the transition to a new panel where they are experiencing a variety of changes, such as a new program in terms of emphasis and organization and increased integration with regular students.

In the second phase of the study, we intend to determine whether or not the self concept of gifted students improves as they progress through the program.

AN OVERVIEW

Upon review of the results, there is no doubt that programs for the gifted have been well received by both the staff who teach these programs and the parents whose children are enrolled in them. Parents say their children have a positive, even enthusiastic, attitude toward school and this is confirmed by their teachers. In short, these children enjoy being in a gifted class and teachers enjoy teaching them.

In terms of the program itself, teachers agree that the "differentiated" program is an effective way of meeting the needs of the gifted and parents acknowledge that generally this program meets the needs of their children. Many of the parents' comments imply that their children have benefitted both socially and intellectually, and that they feel better about themselves personally as well.

Overall, the parents and teachers referring to the elementary level program were the most positive. In the higher grades, some teachers experienced difficulty in meeting individual needs through program modification; for example, finding it hard to accommodate the wide range of differences and exceptionalities. Likewise, some parents with children in the junior high and secondary programs did not think the students were encouraged to pursue their own individual interests and/or were unsure about how well the program met their physical, social and emotional needs.

Parents, from all panels, frequently cited the challenge and stimulation of the gifted program (either generally or in relation to a specific subject) as one of its major strengths. Both parents and teachers agreed on the following, as also being particularly effective features of the program:

- the association of students with their gifted peers
- high quality teachers
- smaller classes

Finally, suggestions for changes to the current program were offered. Aside from recommendations about particular subject areas, parents were most likely to request more individualization of program, increased communication with the teacher and/or school, and more detailed information about the program itself in terms of curriculum, objectives and expectations. Teachers, on the other hand, were more likely to express dissatisfaction with and/or make suggestions about the coordination of the program between teachers and schools; the sharing of ideas and resources with others; the availability of materials and professional development opportunities, and class size.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PERCEPTIONS OF THE GIFTED PROGRAM

PARENT SURVEY

1. What grade is your child in?

Grade	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. How many years has your child been enrolled in the gifted program in North York?

Less than one year	One year	Two years	Three years	Four years	Five years or more
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Which of the following best expresses your child's attitude about being in a gifted class?

Very enthusiastic	Positive	Indifferent	Negative
☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure
4. I have an adequate understanding of the gifted program.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I am aware of the activities and experiences that my child pursues in the gifted class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. The gifted program offers a greater variety of experiences than the regular program in terms of:					
(i) program content	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(ii) teaching strategies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(iii) learning environments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Generally, the gifted program seems to be meeting the individual needs of my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please elaborate. _____

_____

_____

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure
8. The program provides my child with interesting, challenging learning experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. My child is receiving satisfactory instruction in the basic academic skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. A wide variety of materials and human resources are made available to gifted students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. The gifted program encourages my child to pursue individual interests and talents.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. The gifted program encourages my child to develop good work habits in terms of:					
(i) task commitment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(ii) organizational ability	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. The gifted program encourages my child to pursue investigations to a greater depth and breadth.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. The gifted program encourages my child to think in new and different ways.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. The gifted program addresses my child's physical, social and emotional needs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please elaborate. _____

_____

16. The gifted program stimulates creativity in my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. I am kept well informed of the program and my child's progress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. In what ways has the gifted program affected the way your child feels about him/herself?

_____

_____

19. Has participation in the gifted program contributed to any other significant changes in your child? If so, in what ways?

_____

_____

_____

_____

20.(a) What aspects of the gifted program do you find to be particularly effective for your child?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(b) What changes, if any, would you like to see in your child's current program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

21. Additional Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Please return your completed questionnaire
by November 15, 1984.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

E.R. & E.S.
September, 1984

APPENDIX B

PERCEPTIONS OF THE GIFTED PROGRAM

TEACHER SURVEY

1. What grade(s) do you currently teach?

Gr.3	Gr.4	Gr.5	Gr.6	Gr.7	Gr.8	Gr.9	Gr.10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. How many years have you been teaching a gifted class?

One year	two years	three years	four years	five years
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate by checking the appropriate box how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure
3. A differentiated program, based on modifications of the regular school program, is an effective way of meeting the needs of gifted children.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I feel comfortable implementing a differentiated program for my students.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I enjoy teaching gifted children.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. For the most part, student placements in the gifted program have been appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. The gifted students display a positive attitude towards school and learning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. There are adequate resources, materials and facilities available to provide an effective gifted program.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. I am able to meet individual needs and interests by varying the degree of program modification for each child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure
10. I feel that the gifted program is meeting the expectations of:					
(i) the students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
(ii) their parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. What are the (a) advantages and (b) disadvantages of the existing organizational model for providing gifted education in North York?

(a) advantages _____

_____

_____

(b) disadvantages _____

_____

_____

12. Has your perception of gifted children changed? If so, in what ways?

_____

_____

_____

13. Do any problems or conflicts exist between the gifted students and the regular students? If so, please explain.

_____

_____

_____

14. (i) What do you feel are the major strengths of the current gifted program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

(ii) What are some of the program's weaknesses?

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. If you were involved in making changes in the gifted program, what would be your recommendations?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. Additional Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please return your completed questionnaire via courier
to Educational Research and Evaluation Services
by Thursday 15 November 1984.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

E.R. & E.S.
September, 1984

APPENDIX C
PARENT SURVEY - OPEN ENDS

a) The gifted program seems to be meeting the individual needs of my child.

Positive	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
. My child is challenged, stimulated, kept busy and interested. Is more motivated and strives harder in the competitive environment and has a greater desire to learn because she/he is not held back (117)	64	48	5
. Before my child was bored/unhappy/a behaviour problem. Now has a very positive attitude to school, really enjoys it, eager to attend, enthusiastic, happier, "turned-on" (78)	43	32	3
. Individualized program. Child works at a pace suitable to ability, e.g. more advanced work as needed, special help in problem areas, opportunities to develop his own interests. Good P.T.R. enhances individual attention (25)	15	8	2
. Success depends on the teacher; caring, outstanding, dedicated, sensitive, intelligent (24)	14	9	1
. Pleased with program and progress. Improved school work and habits (23)	11	12	-
. Benefits from "peer" interaction, being with others of similar interests and abilities. Sense of belonging, more comfortable (22)	13	9	-
. Encourages individuality, freedom, flexibility and independence. A sense of intellectual and/or creative freedom, spontaneity (18)	13	4	1
. More mature, well-adjusted, confident. Better self-esteem (16)	12	4	-
Negative			
. Work is too easy, expectations too low. Need more challenge and push. Has the potential to accomplish more (17)	14	3	-
. Lack of individualization. Treated as one homogeneous group - "special" abilities or problems are not defined or developed (15)	8	7	-
. Unhappy in general, e.g. apathetic, lacks motivation, not producing, bored. Poor content and teaching strategies (15)	-	12	3

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
. At times too much pressure, stress; especially in weak areas. Fear of failure. Don't presume they know so much (14)	9	4	1
. Spend more time on basics. Concern that basics are overlooked, in exchange for "freedom" (13)	9	4	-
. Quality of some teachers inadequate. Inexperienced, disappointing (13)	5	7	1
. Unsure about junior high program, confusion re what it's about. Disappointing transition from the elementary program (7)	-	6	1
. Not possible in French program, e.g. one teacher for 10 pupils at 5 different grade levels (4)	4	-	-
. No comment (184)	81	86	17

b) The gifted program addresses my child's physical, social and emotional needs.

Positive

. Relates better to peer-group; a comfortable, close-knit "support" group (51)	26	25	-
. No different/no more so than in a regular program (30)	12	18	-
. Generally happier - at ease, relaxed, well behaved, confident, proud, positive (20)	13	7	-
. Socialization encouraged. More social awareness, personal contact, interaction (19)	15	4	-
. Depends on the teacher; generally aware, sensitive, empathetic (18)	12	5	1
. Yes - generally, a good balance (9)	5	4	-
- physical activities, development (9)	4	5	-

Negative

. Physical development is not encouraged, seems to be a low priority/need more organized sports (25)	10	8	7
. More emphasis on social skills, interaction with regular kids; split grades are a social disaster. (not enough of same sex in class) (14)	8	6	-

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
. Meeting emotional needs could be improved. They are "different" and not well understood (12)	8	4	-
. Loss of neighbourhood friends, less out of school contact with friends (10)	6	4	-
. "Labelling" has disadvantages, e.g. animosity, feelings of superiority, elitism (7)	3	4	-
. Poor teachers (6)	5	1	-
. No comment (298)	141	138	19

c) In what ways has the gifted program affected the way your child feels about him/herself?

Positive

. Increased self-confidence and assurance, improved self-image (185)	99	75	11
. More confident in abilities, ideas, school-work. Willing to take chances, make decisions (65)	32	30	3
. From a "loner" to a "social being", no longer the "oddman out". Has a sense of belonging and feels its okay to be different; more positive socially with peers (43)	14	27	2
. Stimulated, challenged, excited, motivated, ambitious, productive, disciplined, independent (42)	21	18	3
. Feels special/proud/privileged/important (35)	22	12	1
. Has maintained a positive self concept. Program enhances or reinforces it (31)	20	11	-
. Positive attitude to school, e.g. happier, enthusiastic, eager to attend (30)	20	10	-
. More aware of intellectual ability and potential, realistic view of capabilities as well as weaknesses (30)	19	11	-
. Sense of achievement, feels she/he is accomplishing more (19)	7	9	3
. Aware of competition therefore encouraged to excel, tries harder (10)	10	-	-

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
Negative			
. Created feelings of inadequacy due to pressure, competition; less confident and sure of self (26)	11	12	3
. "Gifted" label creates feelings of superiority, over-confidence, conceit (14)	6	8	-
. Extremely discouraged, unhappy (3)	-	3	-
. Lonely, loss of neighbourhood friends (2)	-	2	-
. Impossible to isolate one factor or the effect of program from natural maturation process (6)	1	5	-
. No apparent change (41)	13	23	5
. No Comment (80)	38	36	6

d) Has participation in the gifted program contributed to any other significant changes in your child?

Positive			
. Positive attitude to/enjoys school; happier, enthusiastic, no longer bored or discontent (76)	36	37	3
. In general more social, open and outgoing. Relates better to people and is more willing to mix and participate (41)	22	14	5
. More competitive and motivated, strives harder, increased desire to do well, perseverance (40)	16	20	4
. More comfortable/compatible with a peer group of common interests and abilities. No longer feels "like a freak" or ostracized (37)	16	18	3
. More informed, alert, aware; interests and knowledge have broadened, sharpened (35)	25	9	1
. Improved work habits, including organizational ability, task completion, concentration (35)	18	17	-
. More mature e.g. responsibility, self-discipline (32)	21	9	2
. More confident - willing to take risks or try new things (26)	19	7	-
. Independence, self-sufficient (26)	16	8	2

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
. Challenged, learning more. New learning experiences, indepth understanding, higher level of thinking (20)	12	6	2
. Improved academic performance (12)	7	5	-
. Increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses, and also capabilities, goals and interests (11)	7	4	-
. More expressive, opinionated, outspoken, articulate, argumentative (9)	6	3	-
. Others - more tolerant, creative, curious, cooperative, analytical, leadership skills			
Negative			
. Somewhat isolated from friends in neighbourhood and old school. Difficult to get together with new classmates (12)	7	5	-
. Pressure, tension, frustration. No longer "the best in the class". Fear of not keeping up (11)	3	8	-
. Developed an "elitist" mentality, feelings of superiority. Less patience with "ordinary mortals" and less tolerance for routine (8)	5	2	1
. Too much homework. Outside interests, extracurricular activities suffer (5)	1	4	-
. Less interest in school, less happy (4)	2	2	-
. Hard to compare, may have occurred in a regular program as well, may be due to maturation (19)	6	12	1
. No comment (225)	95	112	18

e) What aspects of the gifted program do you find to be particularly effective for your child?

. Many parents cited a particular subject or subjects as the most effective aspect of the program. In order of frequency some of those mentioned were: Math, English/Language Arts, Computers, the Arts, Science (90)	45	40	5
. Challenge and stimulation, indepth study and broader scope, faster pace, no limits (90)	54	32	4

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
. Association with an appropriate peer group of other gifted students. More homogeneous (82)	41	41	-
. Excellent teachers - dedicated, sensitive, skilled, accessible, understanding, qualified (69)	31	32	6
. Smaller class size, good P.T.R. (61)	29	27	5
. Focus on the individual. Flexibility to work at a level/pace appropriate to own interests, needs and abilities. Individuality encouraged, freedom of choice (51)	34	17	-
. Field trips, out of class activities (44)	25	16	3
. The Variety - a variety of experiences, resources, teaching strategies, learning environments, topics (36)	16	16	4
. Researching skills and techniques (33)	25	5	3
. Challenge of peers, creating a high level of competition (27)	9	11	7
. Higher level thinking skills, brain-storming, reasoning, problem solving (24)	15	7	2
. Projects/assignments (21)	14	7	-
. Communication skills/discussions (18)	16	2	-
. Opportunities to foster creativity (15)	7	8	-
. Higher expectations and standards (14)	5	7	2
. Good work habits, organizational skills, etc. (12)	3	9	-
. Others - more responsibility, better environment, interdisciplinary approach, experiential learning, team activities, integration with regular students, self-contained classroom, all of it.			
. No Comment (113)	49	57	7

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
f) What changes, if any, would you like to see in your child's current program?			
. The largest number of suggestions for change related to specific subject areas or topics which parents felt required improvement or an increase in emphasis (206)	126	71	9
For example: the Basics 37 French 30 the Arts 24 Mathematics 20 Computers 19 English/Language Arts 19 Science 16 Physical Education 13			
. More individualization - recognition and support of special interests and talents as well as deficiencies. Allow individual choice (53)	27	22	4
. Improve parent/teacher (school) communication, more contact, feedback, involvement (35)	19	15	1
. More variety and innovation in terms of approach, materials, environments, staff, curriculum (22)	16	5	1
. More information about the program, e.g. curriculum/course outline, objectives and activities, expectations (20)	6	12	2
. More field trips (19)	10	9	-
. More qualified competent teachers, with special training. More careful screening (17)	-	17	-
. More continuity, consistency between years, teachers, panels. Create some standardization (16)	4	11	1
. More homework/assignments (16)	10	6	-
. Less homework, reduce workload (16)	9	7	-
. Emphasize organizational skills and study habits, time management, task completion (15)	-	12	3
. More challenge, e.g. divergent approaches, higher standards, indepth projects, advanced material (13)	-	13	-
. No split-grade classes! (11)	11	-	-

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
. Better evaluation system, e.g. oral, ongoing, personal, daily, detailed (11)	5	6	-
. Smaller classes/lower P.T.R. (9)	7	-	2
. Don't assume they're gifted in all areas, channel into appropriate areas (7)	-	7	-
. Remove "gifted" label, creates a stigma (7)	-	7	-
. More interaction/integration with other students e.g.to foster acceptance (6)	6	-	-
. Lower expectations and competitiveness, "they're still children" (6)	5	-	1
. Teach them human relations and interpersonal skills (5)	-	5	-
. More exams or competitive contests (4)	-	4	-
. Concern re marking standard in relation to regular students e.g. lower marks? (4)	-	4	-
. More structured delivery of program, in terms of content and/or time (4)	4	-	-
. Emphasis on the "whole" child not just academics (4)	4	-	-
. Alternatives to program location: (12)			
- closer to home, in neighbourhood school	-	6	-
- one separate school for the gifted	2	3	-
- in a secondary plant	-	1	-
Comments:			
. Disappointed with the program, e.g. a "farce", "watered down", don't do anything different from the regular program (13)	-	13	-
. Depends on the teacher (6)	6	-	-
. No Comment (220)	108	97	15

APPENDIX D
TEACHER SURVEY - OPEN ENDS

a) What are the advantages and disadvantages of the existing organizational model for providing gifted education in North York?

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
Advantages:			
. Being with and having support of gifted peers/a more realistic, homogeneous social grouping (14)	7	3	4
. Program is more appropriate, e.g. meets needs, better results, more challenging, stimulating, maximizes their potential (8)	4	2	2
. Ideal class size (3)	-	3	-
. Individuals can learn at their own pace. Self-directed learning (3)	-	2	1
. Opportunity for some integration with mainstream students as well (3)	-	2	1
. Self-contained has greater consistency, than withdrawal, continuous curriculum (2)	2	-	-
. No Comment (10)	3	2	5
Disadvantages:			
. Hard to accommodate the range of individual differences, other exceptionalities, specialized needs. Classes too large for "differentiated" learning (4)	4	-	-
. Screening procedures limiting (3)	1	2	-
. Isolation from regular student body (3)	1	2	-
. Removed from home school and community, busing disrupts routine (2)	2	-	-
. Split grades too difficult (especially in French school) (2)	2	-	-
. One school for the gifted would be more effective/efficient (2)	1	1	-
. No Comment (12)	2	4	6

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
b) Has your perception of gifted children changed?			
Yes			
. harder to generalize; more aware of range of individual needs including limitations, weaknesses, other exceptionalities; frail self-image; need lots of positive feedback, guidance and individual attention; aware of some unexpected traits - "humble", high energy, strong language, lack of self discipline, concentration and work habits. . . (29)	10	11	8
c) Do any problems or conflicts exist between the gifted students and the regular students?			
. No, not evident, no more than usual, not yet (18)	6	7	5
. Limited, occasional, very few - maybe some resentment or jealousy, some name-calling (11)	7	4	-
. Two groups don't really interact, integrate (4)	3	1	-
. No comment (6)	-	1	5
d) What do you feel are the major strengths and weaknesses of the current gifted program?			
Strengths:			
. Peer association, sense of group (8)	3	4	1
. Enthusiasm - parents, teachers and/or students/support/commitment to program (7)	3	4	-
. Quality of teachers (6)	4	-	2
. Smaller classes/opportunity for individual attention (6)	3	-	3
. Homogeneous, segregated classes (4)	4	-	-
. Support services, e.g. financial, materials and/or P.D. (4)	3	1	-
. Curriculum - indepth, flexible, challenging (4)	2	2	-
. Higher expectations re process and product (2)	-	2	-
. Cooperative spirit (2)	-	-	2

	Elem. #	J.H. #	Sec. #
Weaknesses:			
. Inadequate coordination - need time to plan, program, share ideas, improve/increase consistency and continuity between teachers, schools and grades (13)	8	3	2
. Shortage of materials, funds, resources and/or P.D. (9)	6	1	2
. Class size getting too large, exceeding the maximum (4)	3	-	1
. Expectations not clearly defined/need more specifics re curriculum (4)	-	2	2
. The identification process - not all belong	3	-	-
- too few girls	1	-	-
- not enough numbers	-	-	1
e) If you were involved in making changes in the gifted program, what would be your recommendations?			
. A central school for the gifted (6)	4	2	-
. Smaller class size, ensure it doesn't exceed the maximum (5)	3	1	1
. More idea and material sharing with other teachers/ time for planning and development (5)	3	-	2
. Revise identification process, e.g. use other criteria, more girls (5)	3	2	-
. More P.D., workshops (ongoing training, full-day sessions) (4)	3	1	-
. More consistency/coordination (4)	2	2	-
. More support, e.g. funding, resources, updated materials, assistance (4)	2	-	2
. Deal with other exceptionalities as well, e.g. S.L.D., behavioural, special ed. (3)	3	-	-
. Eliminate split grades (2)	2	-	-